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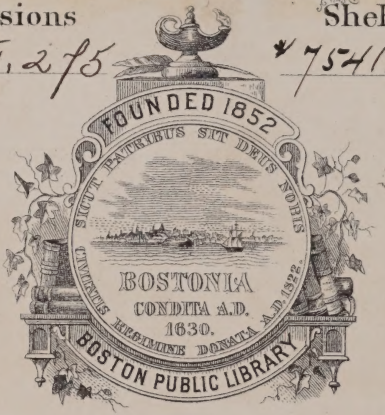

Received Mar. 21, 1889.

THE LATE PROCEEDINGS

IN

ST. PETER'S PARISH, SALEM,

RELATIVE TO

THE RECTORSHIP.

PRINTED FOR THE USE OF PARISHIONERS OF ST. PETER'S,
SALEM, AND ST. PETER'S, BEVERLY.

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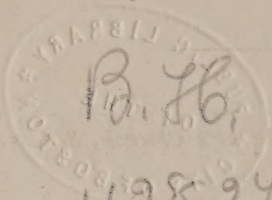
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PREFACE.

To the Parishioners of St. Peter's Church, Salem, and of St. Peter's Church, Beverly.

The differences between the Corporation of St. Peter's Church, Salem, and its late Rector, which terminated in the resignation of the rectorship, being now closed, it has been thought well by many that a full statement of the case should be put forth.

This is done at the desire of those who believe that the history of the late transactions in St. Peter's may not be generally understood by you.

This pamphlet contains all the official documents relating to these differences, or which have a direct bearing upon their complete understanding.

Of the action which was to be taken by the Parish of St. Peter's, Salem, the Rector had received no intimation before he received the record of said action in the communication which, in this pamphlet, is numbered 1, and bears date, April 17, 1865.

It is believed that little is required besides the following documents to give a clear view of the whole affair, and to enable impartial minds to arrive at a fair conclusion in regard to the difficulties between the Corporation and its late Rector.

Long before the resolutions of April 17 were passed, the Rector had decided, that, so soon as a convenient opportunity presented itself, he should resign his rectorship. The probability of this he communicated privately to some of his friends. The action taken by St. Peter's Parish, Salem, in their resolutions of April 17, decided him not to resign as soon as he wished, — not until those principles of the Church which he considered to be assailed in those resolutions were by him vindicated.

The late Rector could not have allowed those principles to have been thus set at naught, and the convictions of the faithful churchmen of St. Peter's to be thus disregarded, and have been true in his loyalty to Christ and his Church, and to those over whom, in the Providence of God, he was called to minister at the font, the altar, and the pulpit.

All true Churchmen must have perceived, that, whatever feelings the Rector may have had of personal interest in this controversy, he was called upon as the instructor of his charge, as well in discipline as in doctrine, to protest, in the name of Christ and his Church, against the mode and spirit of the procedure of the proprietors, which, if acceeded to by him, would have forced him to violate his sacred ordination vows, his promises of loyalty as a Priest in the Church of Christ, and to submit to a complete overthrow of all the Catholic principles which distinguish the American branch of the Church from our Christian brethren not in communion with us.

The late Rector and his friends, if they consulted their own feelings and wishes merely, could never have been prevailed upon to consent to the appearance in print of the article numbered 9 in this pamphlet. No word or act of theirs has ever yet given, or ever will, with their consent, give publicity to the heart-rending domestic difficulties which have occurred in the private sphere of the late Rector's own household ; and even his most intimate friends and parishioners have never received from him any particulars of this great affliction, except in confidence, and in answer to special and urgent solicitation and inquiry. But, since the substance of the article alluded to indicates most clearly the whole ground and root of the bitter opposition which most suddenly and unexpectedly encountered him in his parish, the Rector has consented, chiefly upon the advice of his friends, to allow this article, which appears to him to contain matter so utterly impertinent, scandalous, and cruel, to be inserted in this pamphlet as a not unimportant part of the history of the extraordinary proceedings herein recorded.

This history would not have been printed if the proprietors of St. Peter's Church, Salem, had permitted all the communications of their late Rector to be regularly placed upon their records.

COMMUNICATIONS

BETWEEN THE CORPORATION OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH, SALEM, AND THE LATE RECTOR OF SAID CHURCH.

On the 18th day of April, 1865, the Rector of St. Peter's Church, Salem, received the following communication from the Clerk: —

(No. 1.)

EASTER TUESDAY, April 18, 1865.

REV. WM. RAWLINS PICKMAN.

REV. AND DEAR SIR, — At the Annual Easter Meeting last evening, the following resolutions, offered by Stephen B. Ives, jun., were passed by vote of thirty-four (34) yeas to fifteen (15) nays.

Resolved, That the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, in Parish Meeting assembled, feel constrained to express their opinion and conviction that the interests of the Parish will be best subserved by a termination of the connection between them and their present Rector.

Resolved, That the Clerk cause a copy of these resolutions to be sent to Rev. Mr. Pickman, and that, when this meeting adjourn, it adjourn to meet at this place on Monday evening next, April 24, at 7½ o'clock, P.M.

CALEB BUFFUM, *Clerk.*

On the evening of April 24, the Rector read this paper to the proprietors.

(No. 2.)

Mr. Chairman, and all others present, Proprietors or representatives of Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, Salem.

By a communication bearing date April 18, 1865, from Caleb Buffum, Esq., Clerk of St. Peter's Parish, your Rector is informed, that, at the Annual Easter Meeting, the following Resolution, offered by S. B. Ives, jun., was passed by a vote of thirty-four (34) yeas to fifteen (15) nays: —

Resolved, That the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, in Parish Meeting assembled, feel constrained to express their opinion and conviction that the interest of the Parish will be best subserved by a termination of the connection between them and their present Rector.

Resolved, That the Clerk cause a copy of these Resolutions to be sent to the Rev. Mr. Pickman, and that, when the meeting adjourn, it adjourn to meet at this place on Monday evening next, April 24, at 7½ o'clock, P.M.

CALEB BUFFUM, *Clerk.*

That this communication surprised him, your Rector may not truthfully say. It did not surprise him, because, for some time past, it has been evident to him that there are persons in St. Peter's who are determined to leave no means at their command unemployed if they can remove him from his position.

That so venerable a body as your corporation should permit a resolution, which it must have regarded as having important bearings upon your own interests and consequences, which your Rector thinks few of you could fully realize, to be proposed and carried by the advocacy of one who is not a communicant of the Church, and who for years has manifested no interest in the Church or the Parish, either temporal or spiritual, is to your Rector surprising and incomprehensible. The form of the resolution of S. B. Ives, jun., is of a character peculiar, and its meaning to your Rector not very clear. Whether it be intended as a request for your Rector to resign the rectorship of St. Peter's Parish, or whether it was simply intended to draw from your Rector some expressions in regard to his own private affairs which would remove the opinion and conviction of those who were the authors of this Resolution and its supporters, your Rector is at a loss to discover. If in

this resolution there is any covert allusion to your Rector's domestic troubles, then he would briefly inform you that they in no way concern your corporation.

Your Rector thinks you must have known sufficient of him to learn that he is a man of plain words: expecting and asking plain words from you, he will give the same to you.

The Rector's opinion and conviction in regard to the interests of St. Peter's Parish do not coincide with yours as far as your body has expressed itself in the resolution: his opinion and conviction is confirmed by the views of one in authority above us all,— above the Rector as a Presbyter, above you as laymen in the Protestant-Episcopal Church. The Rector still further believes that the resolution offered by S. B. Ives, jun., and carried, on his advocacy, by so overwhelming a majority, is unsustained by the law.

If so important a resolution may be brought before your body without notice thereof being given in the warrant calling the meeting, then your Rector knows of no resolution touching the interests of the Parish which may not be carried through in the same irregular — and if irregular, illegal — manner.

But waiving the illegality, as your Rector conceives, of your resolution, was it manly, and was it fair to spring such a resolution upon him without a moment's warning? If it was technically legal, was it true to the spirit of law, of manliness, and of justice? and was it true to the spirit of mercy, or to the principles, which, as Christians, we profess to hold? Waiving then altogether the question of the illegality, as your Rector believes, of the resolution, and looking at your resolution simply as it stands, the grounds for a severance of present relationship between the Rector and the Parish are based upon the interests of the Parish, and on that alone.

Now the Rector considers that the interests of the Parish are to be viewed under three aspects: —

1. Its relation to the Church at large.
2. Its own transient interests.
3. Its relations to its Rector, as having a bearing upon his interests and his rights.

In its relation to the Church at large, this Parish has a re-

spectability and a dignity to maintain, and which will be contended for while your Rector's arm may be lifted in its defence, — a respectability and a dignity which this resolution, were it and its attendant circumstances made public, your Rector believes, would little subserve.

The transient interests of the Parish cannot be separated from its relation to its Rector: without the Rector, the Parish is incomplete; and whatever affects him affects the Parish. If by any act of injustice you injure him, then you injure in just the same proportion yourselves.

It has been said to your Rector by some who have expressed for him a deep regard, that they do not see how a dissolution of the relationship existing between the Parish and the Rector at this present time could affect his character or reputation unfavorably. That such would be the effect your Rector feels most deeply, and has, on this point, the written opinion of one to whose judgment your Rector presumes you would pay regard.

Were your Rector to accede to the design of this resolution, he would go from you with an utterly ruined character, — ruined by no act of his own, but by your action. If there is aught can be sustained against him, if you can impeach his integrity, in justice to the Church do it; but if the action of any among you is swayed by motives of worldly policy, if you are led by the blind to do a blind act, the consequences of which you cannot foresee, an act of injustice, which, if done to one of yourselves would arouse your most righteous indignation, then in the name of truth and integrity, and manliness and honor, pause in your action, — an action which, if persevered in, will manifest to the world and to the Church that you have done all in your power to ruin a man and a clergyman, who, in your hearts, you believed to be honest.

But the resolution is based on the interests of the Parish. Interests are not all on your side: your Rector has interests and rights as a clergyman of the Church, whose standing is unimpeachable, quite equal to your interests as proprietors of a business corporation. From the form of your corporation, you seem led to assume that your relations with your Rector are purely of a business character, and may be dissolved at your

pleasure; but this is not true. Your Rector's relations to you, and, more than that, to the whole congregation, are spiritual as well as temporal. These spiritual relations, if dissolved without due cause being shown, affect irreparably his character as a Minister of the Church.

The temporal relations between your body and the Rector, would, at this moment, be very gladly severed by him, because it seems your wish, were it in his power to sever them without detriment to your or his spiritual interests.

Your Rector came here determined to spend his life among you, and to give his life to you. Faithfully to this moment he has done so. His whole aim has been to build up your Church here, and to make your Church a centre of influence for all, who, in your near neighborhood, are looking towards our Church as their spiritual home. He has never sought to be known beyond the immediate sphere of his work. He has found his happiness among you his people. He has sought it nowhere else. He had hoped, that, by his devotion, he had so won your hearts, that, in a time of sorrow and affliction, your hearts would have clung to him, and sustained him by their sympathy. That he has been pained beyond expression by the course which you have pursued towards him, he now tells you. If he has not shown his sorrows, it was not because he did not feel them. God knows he has felt them, and heavy enough they are; but in them all his prayer has been offered for you all, and his last prayer will be that God's blessing may be upon you.

Your Rector, therefore, would express to you, that he is unable to render such an answer to the resolution offered by S. B. Ives, jun., as that resolution would seem designed to draw from him. Your Rector regrets extremely that such a difference of opinion as to what best regards the interest of your Parish should exist. He, therefore, to this resolution of your venerable body, returns for answer that he feels constrained to express his "opinion and conviction," that the interest of the Parish, and the interest of the Rector, would be materially injured by a termination of the connection existing between them at present.

Having returned this answer to your resolution, — an answer

that nothing but a desire to proceed to the very last extent of Christian courtesy could have drawn from him,— your Rector would beg to say to your venerable body, that, if your resolution means that he is desired to resign his Rectorship, he feels that, consistently with the vindication of his own character, and with your position as a venerable Parish, he cannot do so at present.

Your body is aware, that, by public slander, your Rector has been assailed with a grossness, a pertinacity, and a malignity which falls to the lot of few men. You are also aware whence, in all human probability, these evil reports which have touched him came, and by whose hands their seeds were sown. You have known your Rector now for five years; and he is perfectly free to demand if you have not always known him to be open, frank, fearless, manly, and true in his work for the Church, and in his relations to each one of you. You know he has lived only for your interest, and never once has weighed his interests in the balance against you.

Such a resolution as that of S. B. Ives, jun., ignores all such knowledge. Such a resolution implies that there are reasons which render this action necessary on the part of your venerable body. Such a resolution, if its design was acceded to by your Rector, would be utterly ruinous to his character as a clergyman, and to his dignity as a Christian gentleman; and, if he acceded to it, no one of his brethren could henceforth respect him, or trust his loyalty to Christ. Your Rector does not plead with you to rescind your resolution: let it stand upon your records.

But your Rector is not disposed to have this matter stop here. He has a right to know, and he distinctly demands, on what grounds this resolution is based. He demands to know on what charges against him, if there are any, your resolution is founded, and the definite reasons on which this action is taken. A resolution of this kind, as your Rector believes, must, in our church, be founded on distinct allegations: when these allegations are stated, their proof will be demanded before an authority competent to decide. Your Rector, therefore, makes his appeal to the Bishop, desiring that any matters

now in controversy between him and the Parish be brought to the Bishop for his decision.

Before concluding this communication, your Rector desires to say, that, standing as he does this hour in the presence of Almighty God, he has no feeling of ill-will to any party, or parties, who had connection with this resolution. To all who, with an honest heart and a loving desire for the interests of the Church, voted for this resolution, he would say that his love for the Church's interest is not less than theirs. If there be any one who, instrumental in carrying this resolution, was actuated by feelings worldly and unchristian, then your Rector begs here publicly to express his sorrow that this should be; and, as a gross injury and injustice has been done him, would express also his unfeigned forgiveness. All that your Rector has left him in this world is his honor, his integrity, and his trust in God. His honor he is bound to defend while he has life, from whatever quarter it is assailed. His integrity is known, and, he believes, acknowledged in the hearts of all who know him well. His trust in God is the one thing which may not be assailed, and cannot be shaken by this world's troubles. To God's gracious mercy and protection he commends you all; he prays for your peace and quietness, and that the spirit of meekness and soberness and justice may reign in all your hearts, and guide all your councils.

Your Rector requests that this, his answer to your resolutions, be recorded upon the records of your Parish.

WM. RAWLINS PICKMAN.

On the 2d day of May, the Rector received the following:—

(No. 3.)

SALEM, May 2, 1865.

REV. WM. RAWLINS PICKMAN.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,— At the adjourned meeting of the proprietors of St. Peter's Church, held May 1, 1865, the committee to whom was referred your communication to their meeting

of the 24th inst. made their report, which was accepted, and the following resolutions were passed:—

Resolved, That the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, in the resolutions adopted at their Annual Meeting, April 17, 1865, had no purpose of casting any imputation upon the character of their Rector in any of his relations as a man, a clergyman, or a Christian; but that, in expressing the opinion there stated, they were actuated solely by their conviction that the harmony of the Parish required a dissolution of their present relations with their Rector.

The vote on this resolution being taken by ballot resulted as follows: whole number of votes thirty-five,—all in the affirmative.

Resolved, That, for the purpose of bringing back harmony to the Parish, and wholly disclaiming any intention of imputing to the Rector any wrong, the proprietors hereby reiterate their opinion as to the expediency and necessity of such dissolution, and most respectfully but earnestly request their Rector, the Rev. Wm. Rawlins Pickman, to resign his charge of this Parish.

The vote on this resolution being taken by ballot resulted as follows: whole number of votes, forty-five (45); for the resolution, thirty-seven (37); against the resolution, eight (8); and the resolution was adopted.

VOTED, That the Clerk communicate these resolutions to the Rector, and inform him that he will furnish a copy of the report of the Committee if desired.

VOTED, To adjourn for one week, and that the Clerk inform the Rector of the adjournment.

A true copy of record.

ATTEST: CALEB BUFFUM, *Proprietors' Clerk.*

At the Rector's request, the report referred to above was handed him.

(No. 4.)

ST. PETER'S CHURCH, SALEM,
PARISH MEETING, May 1, 1865.

The Special Committee of the Proprietors, to whom was referred the communication of the Rev. Wm. R. Pickman, Rector of the Parish, presented by him on Monday evening last,

and who were instructed to report what course ought to be taken by the Parish under existing circumstances, have given the subject very serious and deliberate consideration, and respectfully submit the following

REPORT.

At the Annual Easter Meeting of the Parish, which was very fully attended, a resolution was adopted by a vote of thirty-four yeas to fifteen nays, by which the proprietors declared their "opinion and conviction that the interests of the Parish will be best subserved by a termination of the connection between them and their present Rector." It was also voted that this resolution should be communicated to the Rector, and that the meeting should stand adjourned for one week. At this adjournment the Rector appeared, and read the response which has been referred to this Committee.

The general tenor of this response was that of complaint with the mode and manner in which this resolution was presented and adopted; with the spirit and purpose of the resolution itself, as unfair and unjust to the Rector; and of inability to agree in opinion with the Parish, as to the propriety of a dissolution of our present relations. It also contained a demand for a statement of the grounds upon which the conclusions of the Parish were based, and expressed a determination to refuse assent to any implied request on the part of the Parish, that he would resign his pastoral charge.

Your Committee believe that this is a fair statement, in brief, of the general tenor of the Rector's communication. They believe also that justice now requires of them a candid statement of the circumstances under which the resolution in question was adopted, and the real grounds upon which it was based. Justice to the Parish demands it, because the record is entirely devoid of any such statement; justice to the Rector demands it in order that it may appear to all men why the Parish thought proper to take this step so disagreeable to them, and apparently so offensive to him, and especially that it may appear on record that the reasons actuating us were

not such as reflected in any way upon his moral or religious character.

And such statement is the more easily made, because the resolution was offered with a prefatory statement of the reasons upon which it was based; and the fact that no different reasons were advanced in debate seems to afford strong presumptive evidence that the Parish were influenced, in adopting the resolution, by the same considerations and reasons avowed by the person who introduced it. Those reasons were briefly these: That it was known and patent to all persons in the Parish, that very serious domestic difficulties and differences had arisen in the family of the Rector, which had become public, and the subject of public discussions and scandal both within and without the Parish, and in our whole community; that these domestic troubles had been, and still were, the subject of debate and discussion, and had caused a wide-spread feeling of alienation and dissatisfaction in the Parish; that, for the purpose of determining their effect upon the Parish, it was immaterial which of the parties was in fault, whether one or both; that the Parish might well assume their Rector to be entirely free from blame, and an injured party in the premises, and yet the fact be apparent that by a fault which did not belong to the Parish, and for which it was in no degree responsible, it was deeply suffering; that there was neither desire nor occasion nor foundation for any charges against the Rector, in any way affecting his character as a man, a clergyman, or a Christian; but that the only ground and reason for the resolution was an abiding conviction that the harmony of the Parish required a dissolution of his relations with us.

These, and these only, were the grounds upon which the resolution in question was advocated. These, and these only, as your Committee firmly believe, were the reasons which induced so large a majority of the proprietors to favor it by their vote. They therefore feel called upon, by a sense of justice, to repel the accusation contained in the response of the Rector, that it was in any way caused by personal hostility to him, or that it was advocated or favored in any spirit but that of kindness and charity to him, and the most sincere sym-

pathy and condolence with his misfortunes. They believe they truly express the real feelings of the entire Parish in avowing the real object and purpose of the resolution to have been the renewal of harmony within the ancient Parish to which we all belong.

Your Committee have felt that justice required this statement of facts at their hands. The question still remains, What is to be done? Surely a most melancholy state of affairs is developed, — a Parish divided and alienated from their Rector, a Rector apparently determined to retain them bound by the connection which they would dissolve.

Your Committee have felt bound to assume that the action of the Parish on Easter Monday was final and conclusive. A vote so decided would seem to place that matter beyond question; and in addition, while your Committee have failed to learn that any of the majority have changed the opinion expressed in the resolution, they have reason to believe that some of the then opponents of the resolution have, since that time, been led to see that the only hope of harmony in the Parish lies in a dissolution of our present pastoral relations. Your Committee are unanimously of opinion that the resolution not only truly represents the real opinion of a large majority of the Parish and the congregation worshipping at St. Peter's, but that it truly sets forth the real needs of the Parish, and the only remedy for them.

In other and plainer words, your Committee are unanimously convinced, that by reason of the wide-spread alienation between the Rector and the Parish, and without any reference to the question whether such alienation be well or ill-founded, his usefulness as a minister among this people is so thoroughly impaired as to make it eminently desirable and expedient that his relations with us should be terminated. In the opinion of this Committee, the vital question to be answered by every parishioner of this Church now is, whether the harmony and well-being, if not the very continued existence, of this Parish, has not now become involved in this issue.

With this firm conviction as to the real merits of the question at issue, and, at the same time, with a recognition of the fact that it is due to the Rector that it should plainly appear

that the Parish have nothing to object to him affecting his moral or religious character, your Committee have thought proper to recommend to the Parish the adoption of the accompanying resolutions. By them, if adopted, the Parish will affirm the statements herein made as to the motives which led to the action of April 17, and, while reiterating the opinion therein expressed, will show the Rector and the world that such opinion is based merely upon the fact that his usefulness has become impaired, and will also remove any doubt as to the purpose and object which the Parish have at heart. Your Committee would also recommend that the Parish should instruct the Clerk to communicate these resolutions, and the request therein contained, to the Rector.

There are reasons why it would seem to this Committee advisable to go no further in this Report; but inasmuch as their instructions seem to contemplate the possible necessity for further action, in case the Rector should still decline to resign his position at our request, your Committee have felt bound to consider the matter in such contingency.

They have not considered the possible rights of the parties in reference to the abstract question, Whether a Parish of our Church may, of and by themselves, dismiss a Rector against his will and without his consent; they cannot believe it possible that it will ever become necessary to raise or discuss so unpleasant a question. Waiving its consideration altogether, they believe the canons of the Church provide a mode by which any such discussion may be avoided. There can be no doubt that the Bishop, as the "Ecclesiastical authority" of the Diocese, has plenary power to allow such dismission. With his concurrence, we may undoubtedly sever this connection, *regularly and canonically.* We would not assume, in advance, that the occasion will arise for us to seek to sever it without his concurrence; and we cannot for a moment doubt that he would, upon a statement of the condition of affairs in this Parish, see the necessity of a change in its Rectorship. We do not doubt that he would conclude with us, that, whenever the case arises in which the vital interests of a Parish become different from those of its Rector, the former should prevail; that the interests of no one man should be permitted to peril

those of an entire Parish; and that an enforced relation between pastor and people could really advance neither the temporal nor spiritual good of the Church. This Parish has a reputation for loyalty to the ritual, the doctrine, and discipline of our venerable Church, which is to be maintained at any cost. That reputation is as dear to all of us as to any member of the whole Church. It is our care for that, and our earnest and anxious wish that it may not, in our day and generation, become less than it was in the days of our fathers, which has prompted our action in this whole matter.

Your Committee therefore recommend, that, in case the Rector shall refuse or neglect to comply with the request contained in the annexed resolutions, the Parish apply at once to the Bishop for his concurrence in a dissolution of the connection between them and their Rector; for the reason that so extensive dissatisfaction and alienation exists in the Parish as to make it evident that his usefulness is seriously impaired, and that the harmony and well-being of the Parish require such dissolution.

With the sincerest prayers to God that we may all *be safely brought through these troubles and perplexities*, and that, in his merciful providence, and by his blessing, these great calamities and perils which now threaten to beset this portion of his Church may be overruled to his glory, and *to the temporal and spiritual good of pastor and people, and the whole body of the Church*, this report is respectfully submitted.

(SIGNED) G. BARTLET, Chairman,
JOSHUA CLEAVES,
FRANCIS COX,
STEPHEN B. IVES, JUN.,
JOSHUA PHIPPEN,
} *Special Committee.*

The foregoing is a true copy of the Report of the Special Committee of the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, returned May 1, 1865.

ATTEST: CALEB BUFFUM, *Clerk.*

On the 8th day of May, the Rector read to the proprietors the following communication:—

(No. 5.)

SALEM, May 8, 1865.

To the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, Salem.

GENTLEMEN,—At your last Easter Meeting, you passed the following resolution, as officially communicated to me by your Clerk, pursuant to your directions:—

Resolved, That the proprietors of St. Peter's Church, in Parish Meeting assembled, feel constrained to express their opinion and conviction that the interest of the Parish will be best subserved by a termination of the connection between them and their present Rector.

To this communication I replied in substance—

1. That my own opinion and conviction of what would, under the circumstances, best subserve the interests of the Parish, was to the contrary of that thus expressed by the Proprietors.

2. That, if the resolution was to be taken as a request that I should resign my charge of the Parish, the request was one with which, in view of the circumstances under which the resolutions was proposed and voted, I could not, consistently with the vindication of my own character, comply.

3. That I demanded to know on what grounds, on what charges, if any, against me, the resolution was based.

I am now notified, that, on the 1st instant, at a second adjournment of your Easter Meeting, a committee of your body, to which my reply had been referred, made their report, recommending certain further resolutions; and that the report was accepted, and the resolutions were framed; and copies of both report and resolutions have been furnished to me by your Clerk. I quote the resolutions according to my copy:—

Resolved, That the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, in the resolution adopted at their Annual Meeting, April 17, 1865, had no purpose of casting any imputation upon the character of their Rector in any of his relations as a man, a clergyman or a Christian, but that, in expressing the opinion there stated, they were actuated solely by their conviction that the harmony of the Parish required a dissolution of their present relations with their Rector.

Resolved, That for the purpose of bringing back harmony to the Parish, and wholly disclaiming any intention of imputing to the Rector any wrong, the Proprietors hereby reiterate their opinion as to the expediency and necessity of such dissolution, and most respectfully but earnestly request their Rector, the Rev. William Rawlins Pickman, to resign his charge of the Parish.

What those facts are, which, although not justifying any imputation upon my character as a man, a clergyman, or a Christian, your body has regarded as justifying you in asking me to resign my charge of this Parish, I learn from the report accompanying these latter resolutions. It is there stated that the grounds, and the only grounds, of your proceeding have been that "it was well known and patent to all persons in the Parish that very serious domestic difficulties and differences had arisen in the family of the Rector, which had become public, and the subject of public discussion and scandal both within and without the Parish, and in your whole community; that these domestic troubles had been, and still were, the subject of debate and discussion, and had caused a wide-spread feeling of alienation and dissatisfaction in the Parish;" and that "the harmony of the Parish required a dissolution of his relations with you."

If any charges were made or implied against my character in any particular, of course I should demand either an open and explicit retractation of them, or a trial upon them before the proper ecclesiastical tribunal; but it appears that no such charges are made or implied in the proceedings of your body, neither is it suggested that there is, or has been, any incompetency on my part to discharge the customary duties as Rector of this Parish.

Neither is it suggested, that, in the debate and discussion you refer to, my character is in any way assailed by anybody else.

If this was suggested, it would determine me absolutely not to resign my Rectorship, lest by doing so I should expose myself and my office to disrepute by the appearance of shrinking before anonymous slander.

Your request that I should resign my office as Rector is placed solely upon the ground that certain domestic troubles of my

own have become the subject of debate and discussion amounting to a scandal within and without the Parish, producing alienation and dissatisfaction within it, and disturbing its harmony. As my character is not alleged to be assailed in this "debate and discussion," it can be of no consequence to either you or me how much of it takes place outside of this Parish: we are only concerned with that which takes place inside of it, and so seriously disturbs its harmony.

That the domestic affairs of any gentleman should become the subject of debate and discussion in this Parish is much to be deplored: that the Rector of this Parish should be thus treated amounts to what you justly call a scandal.

From the strife of busy tongues, whether busy from impertinence or from malignity, the Rector ought, it would seem, to have found escape among such responsible men as compose your body, even if he might not have looked for friendly support among those with whom he has had much intimate relation for the past five years; and I cannot now doubt that if, instead of suffering yourselves to be made the organ of the debate and discussion you refer to, you had rebuked it at the outset as unseemly and unchristian, neither you nor I would have had any further trouble of this nature. But let this pass. You will readily believe that it can afford me no particular pleasure to remain in a Parish where such proceedings on the part of the Proprietors have taken place. If I consulted my own comfort and interest merely, I should resign at once; but I cannot, by any act of mine, give countenance to the notion, that a Priest in the Church of God, having the care of souls in a particular Parish, should desert that care upon no other grounds than the prevalence of personal gossip within the Parish about himself and his domestic affairs. I take a higher view of my office and of its responsibilities than that. I shall therefore not resign my office of Rector in obedience to any such movement as has been made in your body. Whether I shall resign at any future day, and how soon, will depend upon whether, and how soon, all interference with my duty in this respect ceases.

As to "the possible rights of the parties in reference to the abstract question, Whether a Parish of our Church may, of and

by themselves, dismiss a Rector against his will and without his consent," and, I may add, without the Parish showing due and valid cause, I feel very little concern one way or the other. It would be an unhappy thing that such an issue should be made or forced in a Christian Parish; but the responsibility of making or forcing it will never be mine, and, if I find it presented to me, I must do whatever it shall then appear the laws of the Commonwealth permits me to do for the good of this Parish as I understand it, and for the honor of the Church and the rights of my brethren in the ministry.

Your recommendation that, "in case the Rector shall (as he does) refuse or neglect to comply with the request contained in the annexed resolutions, the Parish apply at once to the Bishop for his concurrence in a dissolution between them and their Rector," I sincerely approve. Whatever action in this matter receives the concurrence of my Bishop, as under Christ the head of the Church in this Diocese, will weigh much in my judgment, and influence my conduct far more than any action can do which is taken without such concurrence.

In full harmony with your prayers to God that "we may all be safely brought through these troubles and perplexities, and that, in his merciful providence and by his blessing, these great calamities and perils which now threaten to beset this portion of his Church may be overruled to his glory and to the temporal and spiritual good of pastor and people, and the whole body of the Church," I beg to subscribe myself in sincere and loving good-will to you all,

Your loving and attached Rector,

WM. RAWLINS PICKMAN.

On the 9th day of May, the Rector received from the Clerk of St. Peter's Church, the following letter: —

(No. 6.)

SALEM, May 9, 1865.

REV. WM. RAWLINS PICKMAN.

REV. AND DEAR SIR, — By vote of the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, at their adjourned meeting held last evening,

the Clerk was directed to inform you of the following resolution introduced by Mr. Tucker: —

Resolved, That the pastoral relation between this Parish and its Rector, the Rev. Wm. Rawlins Pickman, be, and the same are hereby, dissolved, so far as this Parish has power in the premises; and that Messrs. John Kilburn, Gordon Bartlet, William R. Gavitt, S. B. Ives, jun., and James B. Curwin, be a Committee to apply at once to the Bishop for his concurrence in such dissolution.

The whole number of ballots on the resolution were forty-six (46), thirty-seven (37) yeas, nine (9) nays. The meeting stands adjourned to Friday evening, May 12, at 7½ o'clock.

Yours, with esteem and respect,

CALEB BUFFUM, *Clerk.*

The Parish of St. Peter's, having applied to the Bishop for his concurrence in the dismissal of the Rector, received from him the following: —

(No. 7.)

BOSTON, May 10, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have received from you a copy of certain proceedings of the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, Salem, including a resolution which was passed, dissolving the pastoral relations between the Parish and its Rector, and appointing a Committee to ask for my concurrence in such dissolution. You also, in behalf of said Committee, request me to indicate the time, place, and mode in which it will please me to meet the Committee, and hear their views on the subject.

Having already heard statements from two gentlemen of St. Peter's, in a recent visit which they made to me, and also stated my views to them, I do not perceive the necessity of a personal conference with the Committee. In one of the resolutions passed on May 1, the Proprietors declare that, in one resolution adopted in the Annual Easter Meeting, they had "no purpose of casting any imputation upon the character of their Rector in any of his relations as a man, a clergyman, or a

Christian;" and in the other resolution they wholly disclaim "any intention of imputing to the Rector any wrong."

This being the statement of the Proprietors in regard to the Rev. Mr. Pickman, I feel that I should do an act of great injustice to him by concurring with the action of the Proprietors, and therefore decline so doing.

I am, very respectfully, yours,

MANTON EASTBURN.

JOHN KILBURN.

On the 12th day of May, the Rector read to the Parish the following: —

(No. 8.)

SALEM, MASS., May 12, 1865.

To the Proprieters of St. Peter's Church, Salem.

MR. CHAIRMAN, GENTLEMEN, FRIENDS, AND CHRISTIAN BRETHREN, — In what I have to say to you this evening, it is quite unnecessary that I should review the ground taken in my two previous communications to your body. The positions held by me in those communications are still fresh in your memory, and, I trust, have been very carefully considered by you all. I wish, however, on this, the last occasion when, in all probability, I shall ever address you in this lecture-room as Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, and I certainly shall never again ask permission to address you, — I wish, I say, before the close of this, your Annual Easter Meeting, to make to you a few remarks, not argumentative, as my former communications have been, but desultory in their character, — remarks which, I have still left a lingering trust, will affect the best and lasting interests of your Parish.

If you persevere in your present course, it seems to me that you will end in dissolving your canonical connection with the Diocese of Massachusetts, as you will learn by a reference to Canon 4, page 63, of the revised canons of the Church, set forth in the general convention of our Church in October, 1859.

Are you prepared for this? Do you intend this? Are you Churchmen, or are you not? Are you men who will abide by the laws of your Church, or are you men who are determined to set the law of your Church at defiance?

Have you just cause of grievance against me, your Rector, or have you not? If you have cause against me, true and valid, show it, allege it, prove it; and I will be the very first to act upon your showing, allegation, proof. If I am not fit to serve you in this Parish, — where I know I have labored with an undivided devotion, and with the poor abilities which I have, — if I have done aught which may rightly forfeit your respect, then I am fit to work in no Parish; and the sooner I am deposed from the ministry, or resign the exercise of its offices, the better for you and for me.

If in the difficulties which have occurred in this Parish, the original source of which came, I believe, from a very few people, you had, as a body, chosen to stand by me with the confidence which your resolutions of May 1 would certainly imply you have in me, you would have found me most willing to act with you in perfect and entire harmony.

If you feared that a withdrawal from the Church of a certain number of families would so diminish your financial revenues as to hamper you in your action, I would most gladly have relinquished so much of my salary as was lost to you by such withdrawal; i.e., have relinquished it up to such time as the position of the Parish might warrant you in again paying it, to the extent of our original contract; so that, in all other aims of Parish work, you would have been as free as ever.

I have worked for you for love, and not for money; and I would work for you for half what you now pay me if I believed I had your hearts. A clergyman with a high view of the sacred ties which bind him to his people cannot work and plan and think by day and by night for that people, as I know I have for you, without loving them. I am not a man of half-way feelings or half-way measures or half-way affections: surely by this time you must know this. Whatever I do, into that I throw my whole soul. I know nothing of policy. I learned when I was a very young man that policy was not the rule to guide a man straight in his life as a Christian.

I have been with you, not because it was politic for me to be here; not because I could here make myself a name and a reputation, and your Parish a stepping-stone to ecclesiastical preferment elsewhere; but solely because I loved you, my people, and found all the happiness which God's goodness gave me in this poor life in working among you. But all this you did not see. This probably the undemonstrative tone of my character prevented you from seeing. I regret that you misunderstood me.

So when difficulties beset me, you totally mistook my character, and, during the action of the past few weeks, have seemed to me to pursue a course toward me formed with the design of intimidating me, and forcing me from my position.

To neither of my communications have you deigned to return any answer. You have passed one eulogistic resolution, followed by another, which, in its effect, destroys the force of the first. You have sent me a report which appears to me a most extraordinary document, and seems to me to contain within itself the elements of its own destruction; but no single argument of my communications have you touched. I do not learn, that, of my last communication, you have taken any notice whatever other than to lay it on the table.

I do not believe, that, as a body, you could have acted with the intention of intimidating me. That whoever has advised your action did intend to intimidate me, seems to me self-evident. On this point I may be wrong. But, my friends, I am not a man to be easily intimidated by any body or set of men I have ever yet seen.

Early in this issue I saw that I must place myself simply and squarely on my own integrity, and with the most humble trust in God, and daily prayer that he would guide me right, determined to go through this contest alone, only with God to help me. God has helped me, and has given me through it all a calm and steadfast reliance upon him.

Surely it could not have been thought by those of you who know me, that I was easily to be removed from the Rectorship of this Parish without due cause being shown.

To stand as a Priest in the Church, in so ancient a town as Salem; so dear to me for its venerable and historic associa-

ions, — a town, every street and alley of which I was taught to love from the time I was a little child, — a town where my fathers, and father's fathers for many generations had been known and respected, and then to shrink at the first blast of a storm raised by the gossip of idle tongues, was surely not an act which my fathers would ever have done; most certainly an act which I shall never do.

No, my friends, the men of St. Peter's Church who have moved against me in this matter knew very little the man with whom they were dealing. If it was their design to intimidate me, they have signally failed. I tell them here, that I know not what the fear of man is. God I fear. Before God I bow. Before the dear and blessed Jesus, I bend the knee, and worship in overwhelming humility, because of his purity, and because of my sins. Before the Spirit of God, and at his word, I am silent and obey; but before my fellow-men, while humbly I strive to serve God, I know as yet no cause why I should ever quail.

To bow down and worship, and submit to, the opinions of any man, when those opinions, however candidly held, are, in the mature judgment of the wisest of those whom I am able to consult, antagonistic to what is right, must never be expected of me.

My friends, I speak with feeling on this matter: it touches my character. That, to me, is far dearer than my life. How deep my feeling is you can never know: God grant your position may never be such that you may gain the slightest knowledge of it! But I repeat here most solemnly, in the presence of God, that I conceive the attack which has been made upon me by the passage of certain resolutions in your Annual Parish Meeting, and at subsequent adjourned meetings, to have been the most fearful that could be made. As I conceive it, you have dealt me the heaviest blow which it was in your power to strike. I state here, I say, most solemnly my conviction that the prime movers in these proceedings — who they were I know not, I wish never to know — were not actuated by high and honorable motives.

I believe that some parties (may God forgive me if I judge them wrongfully!) went deliberately to work in order to carry

out their personal ends to overthrow a man against whom they could have no cause but personal or party pique.

I believe that those parties, by what means I do not know, so wrought upon the minds of high and honorable gentlemen in this Parish, that at last they brought those nobler and better men to think and believe, that, rather than have this sad trouble continue for which they were not responsible, it was their duty to give up and sacrifice their Rector, as they believed, for the best interests of the Church. I think, gentlemen, that you judged wrongly, and that the day is not far distant when you will see it as I see it now.

My friends, I have cared more for your reputation in this matter than for my own. I have contended for you while you have been contending against me; and I thank God, that, up to this point, I have completely guarded your honor and my own in all which in this controversy has passed between us.

My friends, I believe, and I tell you most plainly, that, if you suffer this controversy to go into the Convention of the Diocese on the coming week, where it must be carried if you pursue your present course, there will be found an overwhelming majority of both the clergy and laity against you. Long ago I called upon you to pause in your action. In a document which I read to your body on April 24, I called upon you as tenderly and affectionately, yet as firmly and decidedly, as I could, to pause and reflect whither you were being brought. Again, on May 8, I told you most explicitly whither you were drifting, and the grounds upon which I stood as a Priest in the Church of God, holding in honor my responsibilities, claiming my rights, and ready to stand by them. These documents, I have been informed, were stigmatized as intemperate and passionate, — the last as insulting.

My friends, there were never words written more thoroughly or prayerfully or thoughtfully considered; never words more advisedly spoken. They were discussed by good and wise men, discussed in every particular, before they were presented to you by me. That you have refused to record them on the records of your Church, I extremely regret. Again I beg that you will record them. I do not wish this matter to be brought to the light of the Convention of this Diocese: it would be a

scandal upon our Parish and our Church which could never be blotted out; but it probably must be brought there if you retrace not your whole action. Believe, if you do at all believe in my manliness and love for the Church, believe, if you are ready to stand by the spirit of your first resolution of May 1, that it will be in a spirit of unspeakable sorrow that I shall continue this controversy one single moment beyond the passing hour: I shall not do it unless, by your action to-night, you absolutely drive me to do it.

Every step which I have thus far taken has been one which has almost taken the life out of me in moving in it. You must have seen, that previously I have spoken to you as a man turned into iron by the position in which you had placed him. You have driven me at every point, and left me no choice whatever. You have shaped and absolutely controlled my action. I did not choose it: you absolutely left me no choice. From point to point you have driven me, and I have only moved at your bidding. This, probably, you did not perceive.

Had you quietly left me alone, I should have resigned this Parish long before now, and gone to the smaller, but not less useful, field of labor in Beverly, where I could at least have been at peace and love with my people, and found the quiet and the rest, which, for some time past, my health has so much needed; but you would not let me. You tried to drive me. A *man* may not be driven. God knows that my troubles have made Salem most distasteful to me, and yet my love to you, my people, has never changed or faltered. I am not one given to sudden changes; but, were I permitted by my convictions of right to quit at once a place which has been to me the scene of so much annoyance and unhappiness, I should do so.

All this, in your estimate of my character, you seem to have ignored. You seem to have assumed that I was determined to hang on to this Parish: why you so assumed I cannot tell. I only wished to vindicate my character, my own integrity, when I found it assailed in your community with a grossness utterly disgusting, and with a malicious cunning which I could not trace home to its vile source.

But I feel, now that I stand pure and vindicated in my integrity, partly by your resolutions, but chiefly by the final and

decisive action of our Bishop, which has, I presume, been communicated to you all, that I must make one final appeal to you, not for my own sake, because that is now a matter which cannot concern me at all, and because there is no further action which you can take against me equal to what has already occurred. I do and I must most solemnly plead with you, for the Church of God, that you do not, by any further action of your body, drive me to carry the whole history of our most unhappy troubles before the whole Church of our country through the public press.

I do not wish to do it, I shall not do it if I can avoid it; but I will and I must do it in vindication of my present position, in preparation for my future usefulness elsewhere, in justice to many valued friends, who know me well, and are utterly amazed at the action your body has taken.

This question, my friends, must be settled at once and forever in Massachusetts: Whether the Clergy have any rights or interests in the Church of God, or whether we are the mere paid, time-serving hirelings of the people, to be dismissed or retained at the people's pleasure without due cause being shown. This must be settled somewhere, or the life of the Church of Christ in Massachusetts is gone forever.

This is no party question: great and universal interests are involved in it. The whole body of the Clergy of the Church are at one in this issue. The issue occupies the very broadest ground, and rises transcendently above party into principle. It is a question of the rights of men, before a community and in a country which founds all its institutions (and, thank God, in this new era of freedom founds them universally) on the inherent rights of men and of classes. It is a question of the rights of an order of men bearing relations to other orders in society,— an order of men recognized through the whole land as a distinct class.

It is for the rights of my brethren of the Clergy that thus far I have contended, and to the end I will, God helping me, contend.

And, standing on this ground, I believe that all clergymen who are not swayed by passion, interest, prejudice, or policy, will side with me in this issue when they understand the great

principles it involves, and that their dearest rights are at stake.

My friends, what I wish, as, in all probability, I am drawing near the close of the connection which for five years has bound us together, is this, — that I may leave you with thorough respect, feeling that, as a body, you are men loyal to the best interests of your Parish, and true to the laws and canons of your Church. As a body I believe that you are: did I not so believe, I were not here to-night. As a body, I have never known men for whom I had a more sincere respect and regard. That the majority of you have, by some means which I cannot comprehend, been carried away, against your better judgment, into the action you have taken, I am forced to believe. I cannot, I will not, believe that you would have taken the course which you have taken, were it not, that, for some cause unknown to me, your judgment was biassed.

There has never been a time, since these unhappy affairs arose, when I would not have been glad to meet you each and every one in friendly and Christian intercourse for their absolute and final settlement.

There has never been a time, when, if you had, as a body, approached me with words of tenderness, confidence, and affection, I would not have freely and immediately discussed this matter in all its bearings.

But, my friends, you have not sought or permitted this. It has even seemed to me (and I hope I am mistaken) that you have avoided me. Even some of the little children of my Sunday school, — children that I did and do love most dearly, — have not spoken to me when I have met them in my daily walks. Some of you have treated me with coldness when you met me, or recognized me with a manner so marked as to be unmistakable. Some of the members of some of your families (who they were I shall never tell) will not even look at me when I meet with them on the street. What have I done to deserve this?

My friends, these things have hurt me. I tell you of them frankly. I wish your whole body to know them, that you may fairly judge between me and yourselves.

You know that there are those among you who have shown

me by their manner that they wished no intimacy with me now, no tender relations as of old. *Some* among you have stood by me without flinching. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I shall never forget your nobleness and your love.

My friends, viewing the state of affairs as I was forced to, I very promptly and decidedly accepted the issue you forced upon me in your action of April 17 and April 24; and I determined that for the good of the Church of God, and for the rights of my brethren of the ministry, and for the vindication of my own character, I must meet you on the ground which you yourselves had chosen, and leave the result to the good God above us.

I am still willing, nay, I should be overjoyed, to meet a committee of your body; to have that committee meet me as a plain and simple-minded Christian gentleman, not armed with the technicalities of the law, but trusting only in the grace of the good God to bring us safely through our troubles unitedly and together as pastor and people, — believing in God's defence of the right, loving his Church, and relying solely on the power and strength which comes from faith in our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Meet me thus, and you shall not find me hard to treat with in this matter; nor do I think that the way to settle our troubles for the lasting dignity, interest, and comfort of your parish, will be hard to discover.

You will pardon me, in closing this communication, for saying, that, as you have refused to record, and have neglected to return to me at my request, my two previous communications, I cannot, with a due regard to my self-respect, allow any further communication which I may make you to rest in your hands.

I am, with the warmest love and good-will,

Your attached Rector,

WM. RAWLINS PICKMAN.

On the 13th day of May, the Rector received from the Parish the following: —

(No. 9.)

Whereas, on or about the first of February last, serious difficulties arose between the Rector of this Parish, the Rev. Wm. Rawlins Pickman, and his wife, resulting in a separation, and in her departure from her home and from the city, and that under circumstances which she alleges amounted to compulsion; and whereas such separation has done much to alienate a large portion of this Parish from its Rector, who has persistently refused to explain any of the circumstances to such of his friends as sought such explanation for the purpose of justifying him from the frequent and prevalent charges of abuse and ill-treatment; and whereas, further, the result of such separation, and this persistent silence on his part, had been the alienation of so many members of the Parish as to make it evident that its harmony was seriously endangered; and whereas, further, the Parish, at its Annual Meeting, recognizing the existence of such alienation and want of harmony as a fact to be deplored, and without expressing any opinion as to the merits of the question between the Rector and his wife, publicly and decisively stated their opinion that it was expedient that the pastoral relations of the Parish should be dissolved; and whereas, further, in response to the Rector's complaints in regard to this action, the Parish distinctly stated upon the record that they had intended to express no opinion as to the truth or falsity of any charge against their Rector, but had conceived the alienation and want of harmony in the Parish to be in and of itself a sufficient reason for such dissolution, and respectfully requested the Rector to resign his charge; and whereas, further, in response to such request, the Rector has refused to resign his charge, and has utterly and contemptuously denied the power of the Parish to act in the premises, or the right of its members to make any such request; and whereas, further, on Monday evening last, at an adjournment of our Annual Meeting, it was resolved by a most decisive vote, that the relation existing between us and our Rector be dissolved, so far as we had power to dissolve them, and a committee was appointed to solicit the concurrence of the Bishop in such dissolution; and whereas, further, the Rector of this Parish, the said Wm. Rawlins Pickman, has, without the consent of the Parish, accepted the Rectorship of another Parish, and has thereby assumed duties and responsibilities inconsistent with the full and perfect performance of his duties as Rector of this Parish:

It is therefore

Resolved, By the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, that the Rectorship of this Parish is now vacant, and that the Rev. Wm. Rawlins Pickman is no longer its Rector, and is not to be recognized as such by any of the officers of this Church or Parish.

Resolved That the Treasurer of this Parish be, and he is, hereby forbidden

to pay to the Rev. Wm. Rawlins Pickman, the late Rector of this Parish, any salary except up to this date.

Resolved, That the conduct of the late Rector of this Parish, in endeavoring to continue his relations to us after it had become manifest that his services were not desired by the Parish, is characterized only by selfishness and obstinacy, and has already proved most injurious, not only to this Church and Parish, but to the whole body of the Protestant-Episcopal Church; and that, for these reasons, it meets and receives our most hearty censure and condemnation.

Resolved, That if this most unhappy controversy shall result, as it surely must if Rev. Mr. Pickman persists in his present course, in grievous injury to the cause of the Church and of religion itself, this Parish hereby declare themselves free from the responsibility of such result, and solemnly call God to witness that they have done every thing which the spirit of Christian charity and forbearance could have required or suggested.

Resolved, That the salary of the Rector of this Parish for the present year shall be at the rate of twelve dollars per annum.

Resolved, That the wardens and vestry be authorized, if in their judgment it is expedient, to procure such temporary supply as may be necessary, so long as the Rectorship is vacant.

At the Annual Meeting of the convention of the Diocese of Massachusetts, the Parish of St. Peter's Church, Salem, was disfranchised.

On the 21st day of May, the Rector was, by the Wardens and Vestry of St. Peter's Church, prevented from performing the duties of his office, and was expelled from the Church.

On the 5th day of June, the views of a minority of the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, Salem, were presented in the following paper, drawn up and read by Charles H. Baker, Esq.: —

(No. 10.)

To the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, Salem.

GENTLEMEN, — On the part of a number of the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, it is proposed to set forth in this paper an explanation of the views of the minority of your body in regard

to the unfortunate difference which now divides the Parish upon the question of the Rectorship.

We would have you believe that our opposition to your measures has not been the result of a capricious or factious spirit, defending an individual because of an infatuated regard for him; and we trust we may show that we do but consider the welfare of the Episcopal Church, with which, we are convinced, that of our ancient Parish is identical.

We desire also to submit suggestions of the means of reconciling our differences, which, we fervently hope, may not be found undeserving of your serious consideration.

And, first, referring to the position we have taken in regard to the late proceedings of your body in relation to the Rev. Mr. Pickman, —

We do not purpose to discuss the event alluded to in one of the resolutions passed by your body as having occurred in the family of that clergyman, believing, as we do, that, if it be in any manner a proper subject for ecclesiastical action, the canons of the Church have not constituted *us* his judges.

We may be permitted to say, however, that we hold the Rev. Wm. Rawlins Pi[illegible]man high in our respect and esteem; our opinion of him being based, in part, upon the testimony of men whose soundness of judgment, purity of life, and respectability of standing in the Church, entitle their estimate of his qualities to the highest degree of respect; upon the almost unanimous expressions of our own parishioners, up to the time of the late occurrences; and upon our own knowledge.

We believe him to be a sound and faithful teacher of the doctrine, and an obedient follower of the discipline of the Church; sincerely a Christian man, whose chief faults, as they appear to us, are those which most often accompany a frank, open, and guileless spirit; and we should be as much surprised as grieved could any of the opinions which some have expressed, of his feelings and motives, be found justified by a full investigation of facts.

We point to the recent prosperity of the Parish for evidence of his patient, unremitting zeal.

Not long previous to his settlement here as Rector, the creation of Grace Church, the death of some heads of families, the

removal of others, had caused a reduction in the number of supporters of the worship of St. Peter's; yet, after about five years of his ministry, it was found so difficult to obtain sittings for persons who desired to attend the services, that the Proprietors felt constrained to increase them by the construction of galleries.

Again: after a brief period of exertion specially made by persons in the Parish, the Rector being the soul of the enterprise, a church has been erected in a neighbouring town, which promises to become the centre of a flourishing Parish.

We could not, in the presence of these facts, persuade ourselves, from any evidence adduced by those who introduced and supported the resolutions of Easter Monday, that any interests of the Parish, spiritual or temporal, demanded a dissolution of its relation with its Rector.

Gentlemen, — We have no doubt that it was considered, by a majority of those who voted for the resolutions of Easter Monday, that they were so framed in words as to exclude the idea of censure being conveyed by them; and the Proprietors, at their next meeting, voted, in effect, that no expression of censure was intended. But, whatever the intention, no indifferent person could have given these resolutions a kindly interpretation. It matters not how mild the expression, the fact remains, that the passage of these resolutions amounted to a vote of censure.

It is idle to say that a simple misfortune, which does not physically or mentally disqualify a clergyman for the discharge of his parochial duties, may cause just apprehensions in regard to his usefulness.

It is otherwise if this *misfortune* be of that moral sort that should get the name of crime.

Disclaim as much as we may the intention of reflecting upon the character of a clergyman by a vote explicitly or implicitly asking him to resign, the making such request, is, to the understanding of most people, as distinct an imputation of moral unfitness for his position as can be presented, provided the request be not based expressly upon other considerations. Everybody understands in the present case that the Rev. Mr. Pickman is not chargeable with mental or physical inefficiency

or disability; and everybody connects the request made him to resign with some one or more of the slanders pervading the atmosphere of public rumor.

Conceiving then that the effect of resigning his position under the circumstances would be, in a manner, to tacitly acknowledge, as well founded, imputations which he felt were groundless, was it surprising that he declined to act upon the suggestion of the resolutions?

He knew the proper course for those who were persuaded of his unfitness (upon what evidence he could not know), — the course prescribed by the canons of the Church.

He knew that the laymen of his Parish were represented among the framers of the canons; that they shared, in the conventions, that power of the laity amounting to a veto, which can prevent the establishment of any canon; and he could not have supposed that they could adopt any course other than that laid down, still less that they would adopt a way expressly forbidden by the canons.

A canon of the Church requires the presentment of such charges as are entertained against the Rector of the Parish to the Standing Committee of the Diocese; and this is the action that should have been taken by any who knew of offences committed by the Rector.

While we believe that a majority of those who voted for the resolution of dismissal did so upon the ground that the existing alienation was sufficient justification, we have yet reason to believe that there were those who, from the first, entertained in their own minds charges so serious against the Rector as to be unable to profit longer by his ministrations; and we believe this to have been Mr. Pickman's conviction.

We submit then, that he had a right to expect that these persons would bring such charges to light before the Standing Committee, so that there they might be substantiated or disproved.

But no such course has been pursued: a form of dismissal has been carried out without the consent of the only authority that can make such dismissal more than a form; and it is now maintained that the Rev. Mr. Pickman is no longer Rector of St. Peter's.

Nevertheless, we cannot comprehend how an action, confessedly in violation of a law, taken by those who are subject to that law, can be by churchmen considered accomplished. Neither men nor corporations can be permitted to derive benefit from their own wrongs.

And we have taken pains to ascertain that the action of the Parish is not recognized by the diocesan authority as having made a vacancy in the Rectorship.

Had that authority recognized such a vacancy, we could not have given countenance to the further exercise by the Rev. Mr. Pickman of the functions of that office; but, while he is recognized as Rector by that authority, we are constrained to discourage any usurpation of his functions by other persons, how great soever may be the respect and esteem in which we hold them.

We have intimated that the position we take has no reference to personal preferences, but is based entirely upon our sense of the duty we owe the Episcopal Church. We have now to say that we have not consulted nor advised with the Rev. Mr. Pickman touching the nature of this address. He has not been informed of its purport and tenor; and it should be distinctly understood that the suggestions we are about to make are entirely our own, and are not even based upon any remarks drawn from him with the intention of using their substance herein. We shall, nevertheless, state what we believe to be his feelings and wishes, whenever it appears proper to do so, in order to set forth our own views more distinctly.

After what has lately transpired in the Parish, it would be very surprising if Mr. Pickman should retain any desire to remain in connection with it; and we have no doubt that his desire to dissolve his relation with the Parish is quite as strong as the reciprocal feeling of the Proprietors.

Then what action of his would soonest remove the existing difficulty by securing the recognition of a vacant Rectorship in St. Peter's by the diocesan authority?

His resignation would undoubtedly have that effect.

Then what considerations probably restrain him from tendering his resignation?

First, The Wardens and Vestry have been instructed not

to recognize him as Rector; and would, upon receipt of his resignation, make answer that, being no Rector, he could not resign.

Second, He undoubtedly believes that he has a right under the canon law *not* to be dismissed without cause shown, and the concurrence of the Bishop; and his resignation, as affairs stand, with resolutions of dismissal remaining on record and in force, would be a desertion of the principle already referred to as governing his procedure hitherto.

Third, He has, while recognized as Rector of St. Peter's by the diocesan authority, and by half the worshippers in the Parish, been prevented from performing his most important function by a display of force; and we believe that he considers not only himself, but the parishioners who desired his ministrations on that occasion, as having been divested of sacred rights which ought, in simple justice, to be restored.

These we conceive to be the reasons he might give for withholding his resignation.

And there is no doubt he believes he would do wrong to promise or agree to resign on condition that these reasons given above be rendered of no force by the repeal of the resolutions.

And yet we do not hesitate to say that it is our firm belief, that, should the annulling of the reasons just assumed be effected by action of the Proprietors, the resignation of the Rectorship would be speedily in the hands of the Wardens.

And inasmuch as the action of the Proprietors has really, in the opinion of every one, been more or less at variance with the canon law, we submit that it will cost them no sacrifice of dignity to retrace their steps.

As we merely take our stand upon the law, we have nothing to suggest relative to such of the resolutions as are not in contravention to it, or ancillary to those that are, otherwise than to beg your body to consider well whether there are not some of them harsh and unkind.

But, in regard to such part of your action as is not in strict conformity to the canon law, we implore you in the name of our beloved Church, and of those pious souls to whose bounty we owe the establishment of this ancient Parish, to repeal it,

that we may leave behind us this wilderness of confusion in which we are wandering, and return to that safe path of obedience to our Church from which we ought never for a moment to have strayed.

We beg leave, therefore, to submit the following preamble and resolutions: —

Whereas, it appears, that, in taking action upon the dissolution of the relation between the Rev. Wm. Rawlins Pickman and this Parish, the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church have not, in all respects, conformed to the requirements of the canons of the Church; and —

Whereas, this Parish entertains no intention to violate the provisions of those canons, —

Resolved, That so much of the action of this Corporation as is contrary to the requirements of the canons of the General and Diocesan Conventions be hereby rescinded.

This Resolution was laid on the table by a vote of 31 to 19.

On the 20th day of June, the Rector received the following: —

(No. 11.)

SALEM, June 20, 1865.

REV. MR. PICKMAN.

DEAR SIR, — At a special meeting of St. Peter's Parish, held by adjournment June 19, 1865, the Committee who were charged with the duty of representing the Parish before the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Diocese, in regard to the satisfaction to be made by the Parish for its uncanonical acts, reported that the Diocesan Committee had adopted the following preamble and resolutions: —

Whereas, it appears from the Records of the Parish of St. Peter's, in Salem, that on the 12th day of May, 1865, that Parish did, by vote, at a lawful meeting, declare its Rector, the Rev. William R. Pickman, dismissed from his parochial charge, without the concurrence of the Bishop of this Diocese in such dismission, as required by Canon 4, Title ii., of the Canons of the General Convention; and whereas, official notice of this action was communicated to the recent Diocesan Convention; and whereas, the Convention did therefore appoint us, the Bishop and the Standing Committee of the Diocese, a Special Committee, with full powers, to determine what satisfaction the said Parish ought to make to the Convention, according to the requirement of the above-mentioned Canon: Therefore

Resolved, That, in the judgment of this committee, the Parish ought —

1. To place on its Records an acknowledgment that the act in question was uncanonical, and ecclesiastically irregular.

2. To place on its Records a declaration that, "apart from the differences of opinion and feeling that have arisen in direct connection with the progress of the measures recently taken to remove the Rector from his Rectorship, the Parish bear testimony to the zealous and faithful discharge of his professional duties, and to his unimpeached personal reputation throughout the period of his pastoral service in St. Peter's Church."

3. To pay the Rev. Wm. Pickman, at the former rate, at least up to the first day of July of the present year.

At the same meeting, the Parish adopted the following resolutions: —

Resolved, That the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church cheerfully accept the conditions proposed by the Special Committee of the Diocesan Convention, and embodied in their resolutions, as the terms upon which the Parish may make satisfaction for their violation of the canons of the Church.

Resolved, That the Wardens be requested to furnish the Rev. Mr. Pickman with a copy of the preamble and resolutions adopted by the Special Committee of the Diocesan Convention, and to inform him that the Parish have cheerfully accepted the terms proposed by said Committee.

Resolved, That the Treasurer be hereby instructed to pay the Rev. Mr. Pickman, according to the recommendation of the Diocesan Committee, up to July 1, 1865; to wit, the sum of three hundred and seventy-five dollars.

The undersigned, feeling that they could not by any language of their own so clearly express the action of the Proprietors as the wording of their resolutions would, they have copied them in full.

Please to advise us when it will suit your convenience to receive the Treasurer, and he will wait upon you promptly.

Very respectfully yours,

JOHN KILBURN, } *Wardens of*
GORDON BARTLET, } *St. Peter's Church.*

On the 20th day of June, the Rector communicated to the Proprietors of St. Peter's Church, Salem, his letter of resignation: —

(No. 12.)

To John Kilburn and Gordon Bartlet, Esquires, Wardens of St. Peter's Church, Salem.

For the Proprietors of said Church.

GENTLEMEN, — I have this day received a communication from Messrs. John Kilburn and Gordon Bartlet, the Wardens of St. Peter's Church, Salem, reporting to me the action of a special meeting of St. Peter's Parish, held by adjournment, June 19, 1865.

The principle for which I have so long contended with the corporation of St. Peter's Parish is, in my judgment, now fully vindicated.

The position assumed by me at the first has been sustained by the Bishop of the Diocese. It has also been sustained by the Convention. It is now acknowledged by the action of your own body to be correct. I am fully and entirely satisfied with that action. I only wish you had adopted a similar course long ago, and so spared yourselves and myself all the trouble of the past two months. I rejoice that you have now placed yourselves in such a position as to allow me to offer my resignation without any sacrifice of my personal or official dignity, and without any compromise of those principles of the Church which it has been my duty to uphold.

Understanding from your resolutions, read together with the diocesan action which produced them, that my legal and canonical position is now recognized by you, I hereby gladly resign that position, to take effect now; for you will readily believe that I neither wish to continue in that position, nor can I derive any gratification from doing so. I shall immediately address the Bishop requesting his concurrence in my resignation, as required by Canon 4, Title ii., of the Canons of our Church.

I have tendered my resignation as taking effect at the present date, and not on the first of July, in order that you may no longer be deprived of the services of the Church of Christ. On next Sunday, I trust you may have a minister authorized to perform the duties of the Priesthood. It has been to me a

grief inexpressible that for some Sundays past you have been deprived of the regular ordinances of the Christian religion, and that, on those hallowed seasons of Whitsuntide and Trinity, the Holy Communion of the body and blood of our adorable Saviour has been withheld from you. Let it be so no longer, I beseech you, dear brethren, — in the name of Christ, let it never be so again. And now, my friends, I ask, in simple justice, that you bear me witness, that, through all our unhappy difficulties, I have never met any one of you except in kindness and manliness and frankness. I have loved you well, and I love you now. I think you have been mistaken in your estimate of me; but may God ever bless you and yours.

It would have been a gratification and a pleasure to me to worship once more in the Church which I believe I have loved well, and which is endeared to me by associations more tender than any of you can ever understand. It also would have been a great comfort to me once more to have broken the bread of life to a people among whom I have spent the five most laborious years of my ministry. But believing as I do that it would be disagreeable to the majority of your body to see me again as your clergyman, I tender to you my resignation from this moment.

I have to say to you that I believe I have truly striven to make my work in your Parish for the honor of the Church of Christ.

I leave my work among you very reluctantly, because it is imperfect, and because the plans which I had designed for your prosperity, as I hoped, were but in their beginning. God's will be done. I came to you feeling that my work among you was for my whole life, and I laid my foundation among you for a life-long work. I had no care but for your interests; and that care I strove to guard with all my heart. If I have wilfully failed in any part of my trust over you, may God, of his mercy, forgive me.

One only request I have to ask of you, — a request I cannot but believe every one of you will cheerfully grant me. It is this, — that you permit your children to meet me with love and kindness. I have loved the little ones of my flock very dearly.

I am conscious how very imperfectly I have taught them; but they have had my whole heart.

To make them happy has been a chief part of my labors, and the chief part of my happiness. I know them all by name, each and every one: there is no one of them that I do not love. May God bless them, and make them a comfort to all of you who may live to see them grown to manhood or to womanhood.

Since I have been Rector of your Parish, there has been much kindness and generosity shown me; far more than I deserved. I have felt it deeply. I now thank you for it with all my heart. I pray God that peace may be with you and reign in all your councils. Praying once more that God's blessing may dwell richly in all your hearts, and that by your lives you may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things,

I am your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM RAWLINS PICKMAN.

15 Winter Street, Salem, June 20, 1865.

On the 23d day of June, the Rector received his salary up to June 20, and receipted for the same.

On the 29th day of June, the Rector received from the clerk the following: —

(No. 13.)

SALEM, June 29, 1865.

To REV. WM. RAWLINS PICKMAN.

REV. AND DEAR SIR, — I find that I was in error in my money transactions with you on the 23d inst., as you will see by the following resolution of instruction. "Resolved, That the Treasurer be hereby instructed to pay the Rev. Mr. Pickman, according to the recommendation of the Diocesan Committee, up to July 1, 1865; to wit, the sum of three hundred and seventy five dollars." Therefore, without reference as to what I may think as an individual, it was plainly my duty as

Treasurer of the Church to act up to my instructions, which I feel in this case I have not done, and also that the requirements of the Diocesan Committee would not be fulfilled. I therefore enclose the balance belonging to you, thirty-two dollars ninety-six cents.

Your obedient servant,

CALEB BUFFUM, *Treasurer.*

On the 29th day of June, the Rector sent to the Clerk the following note: —

(No. 14.)

My dear Sir, — I have this moment received from you a letter enclosing me $32.96: I have not counted it, but return it in the package just as received.

I consider the sending it to me the very grossest of all the gross insults which, for some time past, I have received officially through your hands from the Corporation of St. Peter's Church, Salem. I wish you most distinctly to inform the Corporation of St. Peter's Church, at their next meeting, that I so consider it. All I could receive from St. Peter's Corporation was my salary, due at the date when I resigned the Rectorship, and when, both by civil and canon law, I believe my Rectorship to cease, simply and solely by my own free and unconstrained act of resignation. Had I not believed that there was conveyed in the action of the Corporation of St. Peter's on June 20 a distinct recognition of my rights as Rector under the canon law of the Church, you may be sure I should not have resigned. Your action of June 20 I took as an explicit avowal of those rights for which so long and unhappily I contended with you. With that understanding, I tendered my resignation. Whether it has been accepted, I am not informed. Whether the next Annual Convention of our Church will decide that I am or am not your Rector, I do not know. Had you notified me of any acceptance of my resignation, the question could admit of no doubt: there is doubt about it now.

In regard to the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Massachusetts (to which body you refer in your last communication), as to what they advised your Corporation to do in order to put your Parish in canonical connection with the Church, I have had no interest. That Committee have no powers relating to me, nor have they in any way communicated with me since their advice to you. As a matter of course, they could not do so. They were appointed an advisory body for the Parish, not for me. My appearing before them was an act of courtesy at their request. I must now decline to have any further communication with the Corporation of St. Peter's Church, Salem.

I am very truly yours,

WM. RAWLINS PICKMAN.

15 Winter Street, Salem, 7½ A.M., June 29, 1865.

To CALEB BUFFUM, Esq., Clerk of St. Peter's Church, Salem.

As far as the late Rector of St. Peter's Church, Salem, is aware, this pamphlet contains all communications which have a bearing upon the subject in controversy between St. Peter's Church and himself. He does not think that any comment upon them is needed.

(Dec., 1888, 20,000)

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